

I am writing to urge to you to stop phone companies from imposing misleading charges on my monthly phone bill. I support the petition filed by the National Association of State Utility Consumer Advocates and endorsed by other consumer advocacy organizations, including CU. This petition, CG Docket No. 04-208, Petition for Declaratory Ruling Regarding Truth-In-Billing and Billing Format, is long overdue. I feel that a long list of obscure charges obfuscates my phone bill and the real reasons for the charges. For instance, long distance and wireless bills often contain surcharges with misleading names that imply that the line items are mandated by law, when they are not. Phone bills should be truthful, simple, and clear. Because this practice is tolerated by the FCC, long distance and wireless phone companies are able to hide the true cost of service. These add-ons make the advertised price of service significantly less than the actual cost. Competition will not work if consumers cannot accurately compare prices. The FCC should grant the NASUCA petition to investigate carrier practices related to line item charges on bills for wireline and wireless phone service; to declare certain practices in violation of the Commission's "Truth in Billing" Order; and to prohibit carriers from imposing separate monthly fees, line items, or surcharges unless expressly mandated by law or the charge is expressly authorized by a governmental authority.